

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 1911.

# "TOURING WASHINGTON" AUTO RIDERS REVEL IN GLIMPSES OF CITY'S WEALTH AND POWER

Sightseers on the "Rubberneck Wagon"  
Are Shown All the Magnificent Residences, While the Barker Proclaims the Pedigrees and Bank Accounts of Owners.

The large house on the left is the home of Mrs. Levi Z. Leiter, mother of the famous cotton speculator, Joseph Leiter, of Chicago. The young man in the baby carriage on the sidewalk is Joseph Leiter, Jr., who will inherit his father's millions.

Twenty-eight pair of eager eyes fasten upon the innocent and unsuspecting object of awe as the Barker of the "rubberneck" wagon waves his megaphone in the direction of the diadema of the city. The Barker, a stout, middle-aged man, with a friendly smile, is the only one of the features of this infant Cereus, who probably is the son of some unobtrusive family of modest circumstances, living around the corner, and twenty-eight mouths open to emit a chorus of "Isn't he cute."

"Ah!" or an "Humph!" from the unimpressed Western citizen of obviously democratic ideas.

"I call your special attention to the magnificent \$3,000,000 mansion on the right."

"And—snap—go twenty-eight necks to the other side of the car, while fifty-six ears drink in the Barker's toothsome tale of wealth and 'mashety,' glibly rolling the great names off his tongue with a familiarity and nonchalance that can come only through long years of intimate association with the creme-de-la-creme."

"I beg your pardon," interposes a mild little lady, with the soft touch of the Southland in her speech, "but whose house did you say is that large white one?"

"That is the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Moore," reiterates the Barker, pronouncing the name reverently, with a caressing inflection.

"Never heard of them," remarks the little woman, as she sinks back into her seat.

"Very well known social leaders of Washington, New York, and London, multimillionaires," adds the Barker, casting a look of utter scorn in the direction of the unfortunately ignorant little lady, who for the rest of the trip sits in abashed silence.

Many Tourists Here.

This is the busiest time of the year for the Seeing Washington automobile. The tourist season is in full bloom with its annual influx of new-weds, and there is no better way to become acquainted with the city in a few hours than by means of the "rubberneck wagon" and its glibly stenographic Barker.

Every hour of the day one of these big, electric touring vans starts on the round of sightseeing, full to the brim with eager-eyed tourists from every section of the country. Blushing brides and gallant grooms; pairs of spinners with unmistakably pedagogic manner; broad-batted Westerners and their bright-eyed, breezy daughters; soft-

Southern accents and broad Yankee twangs—pile into the huge, cumbersome omnibus, bent on getting a snapshot view of the Nation's Capital.

And when, after about an hour and a half tour of tree-lined streets and avenues, past magnificent mansions and great public buildings, the "rubberneck" has a much better idea of Washington than many a native Washingtonian, who has spent all his life in the city. If the tourist follows this trip with the public building tour and the suburban sightseeing ride, provided by the same company that runs the Touring Washington automobiles, he can, within two days, go back home with the satisfaction of having seen everything worth while that Washington affords the sightseer.

The Washington Herald man joined the rubbernecks a few days ago on one of these swings around the city. He sat between the unimpressed Democrat from the West and a pair of the inevitable June honeymooners.

The tour led first to the White Lot at Mount Vernon.

"From here you get a beautiful view of the famous White House portico, the favorite resting place of the late President McKinley and his wife, Mrs. McKinley," announced the Barker, in appropriately hollow tones.

"Much overrated man," muttered the Western Democrat.

"It is here the children of the District of Columbia hold their annual egg-rolling contest, originated by Mrs. Grover Cleveland," continued the Barker.

"What do they roll eggs for?" whispered the bride to her gum-chewing lord and master.

"Search me," he answered.

"Looking through the trees on your left," again commanded the Barker, "you will see the world-famous shaft of pure marble, the Washington Monument, 155 feet in height, the greatest monument in honor of any man who has lived in civilized times."

"Wasn't it in Jefferson," interjected the bride's neighbor.

"James Abner Roosevelt."

Leaving the White Lot driveway the car rolled into Executive Avenue.

"I call your special attention to this beautiful and massive office building on your left," yelled the Barker. "It is the State, War and Navy Building. It has over eight miles of marble corridors and more than 400 separate offices. On the other side of the executive offices are the executive offices of the city, created by President Roosevelt in order that he might jump out of his office and play a set of tennis between callers. The tennis court has been turned into a golf links."

"Oh—I don't believe it," said the bride.

"It's just joking," explained the groom.

Swinging across the Avenue and up Jackson place the "rubbernecks" are whizzed past the western border of Lafayette Square, while the tireless Barker expatiates upon the beauties of the statues of Rochambeau and

Baron von Steuben, the latter calling phrase—"most beautiful statue in Washington," to which the bride remarked that she didn't think Von Steuben very handsome.

Up Sixteenth street, past the residence of the late Secretary Hay and the church where many of our Presidents and other noted men and women have worshipped, St. John's Episcopal Church, the tourist car rumbles, turning west on K street.

"On our right is the residence of Admiral Dewey, created an admiral by act of Congress. He can never be retired. This is not the gift house, about which there was so much said when the hero of Manila Bay presented it to his wife, sister of John R. McLean," vociferates the Barker.

"Very much overrated man," reiterates the abashedly unimpressed Democrat.

"We are now passing the home of the late Senator McKim, residence of Miss Katherine McKim," announces the Barker, pointing out the ornate facade of the mansion, causing quite a rustle of interest and comment.

A few blocks farther up Connecticut Avenue the Admiral Dewey "gift house" was pointed out.

"What is the 'for rent' sign doing in front of it?" queried one of the school teachers.

"The Deweys don't live there any more since they had to entertain so many guests," was the rather inadequate reply.

In passing the statue of John Witherspoon the Barker indulged in another pleasantries.

"He signed the Declaration of Inde-

pendence not with a pen, but with a sword," he observed. Every one smiled except the Western Democrat, who muttered something about the Declaration of Independence being "much overrated."

Among the Fashionables.

On up Connecticut Avenue the sightseers are regaled with bits of family history and the size of the bank accounts of the various notables inhabiting the state mansions pointed out by the Barker of the megaphone. It must be gratifying to the dwellers within those grand mansions to hear the clatter tones of the Barker expatiating upon their pedigrees and social and financial status. And how mortifying to the nonentities among the neighbors, whose houses are utterly ignored.

In the neighborhood of Dupont Circle the Barker is forced into a variable torrent of a monologue, pointing out the various virtues and historic associations of the statue of Admiral Dupont, describing the Italian Embassy and calling attention to the house of the late James G. Blaine, with its "memorial window erected in the memory of his old colored mammy."

In this neighborhood, too, stands what the Barker describes as the "most magnificent and beautiful mansion in the District of Columbia, the residential palace of the late mining king of the West, Thomas F. Walsh, containing the finest ballroom in the city."

In quick succession come the residences of Lars Anderson, Mary Scott Townsend, the old home of Gen. Grant, the former residence of Senator Aldrich, and the aforementioned residence of Mrs. Leiter.

Swinging east on Massachusetts Avenue the "rubbernecks" are treated to vivid word paintings of the regal social functions and everyday magnificence of life in the Moore mansion, the home of Senator Cabot Lodge, Secretary Meyer, Gifford Pinchot, Senator Root, and the German Embassy; with dissertations upon the marvelous art embodied in the equestrian statues of Gen. Scott and Thomas.

Of the Thomas statue the Barker adds that it is "the most beautiful representation of a horse in the world," another thing of which the sneering Washingtonians who ride by the circle every day doubtless are unaware.

Turning down Vermont Avenue, the tourists are shown the Burlington apartments, "where live many of Washington's most prominent physicians and dentists; All Souls' Unitarian Church, 'the house of worship of President Taft,' and the residence of Uncle Joe Cannon.

Compliments Champ Clark.

"The house of Uncle Joe," says the Barker, "formerly Speaker of the House of Representatives, who has been succeeded by one of the country's brainiest men, Champ Clark, a strong aspirant for the White House."

Whereas the Western Democrat starts to grow enthusiastic, but closes up again at the mention of Speaker Clark's Presidential possibilities, and remarks, still sotto voce:

"Haven't got a chance against Harmon." Passing John R. McLean's residence, which the Barker describes as "the most original house in the city, designed by the late Stanford White, not another like it in the world," the big car turns east on H street and down Thirteenth to F, then east again on its way to the Capitol.

"This is F street," cries the megaphone wailer, "the principal shopping street in the city, where nearly all the aristocratic shoppers do their shopping. Later in the afternoon you can see hundreds of pretty girls and beautiful women for which Washington is noted, passing in and out of the shops and stores, and in the hands of the big car turns east on H street and down Thirteenth to F, then east again on its way to the Capitol.

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A brilliant spectacle was presented at night in the club-house, a large proportion of the passengers and officers of our vessel being gathered there, as well as many tourists spending some time at Funchal. It indeed surpassed in liveliness and brilliancy the spectacle witnessed by me later in the casino at Monte Carlo.

An orchestra, dispensed music in the ballroom for those who cared to dance. Refreshments could be enjoyed at tables in the garden, but the greatest attraction proved to be the long roulette tables, surrounded by the players, conspicuous among whom were several ladies past twenty years of age, and a Church of England clergyman, in clerical costume, all three of whom gambled continuously for two hours. Crowded behind the players were the spectators, who did not wish to play. The games start at 9 p. m. and continue until 6 a. m.

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